A team--and a family--of adventurers, explorers and imaginauts, the Fantastic Four lead lives both ordinary--and extraordinary!

Fantastic Four

After the events of the superhuman civil war, Reed and Sue Richards have decided to take a break from the Fantastic Four to spend time together and work on their marriage. Replacing them are the King and Queen of Wakanda, the Black Panther and Storm!

After thwarting Galactus with the help of Michael Collins, formerly the pacifist killing machine known as Deathlok, and Greg Willis, the newly-resurrected hero Gravity, the Fantastic Four have returned to the Baxter Building to relax. Meanwhile, Reed and Sue Richards' vacation on Titan has been cut short as Reed goes to investigate a mysterious object that has entered the solar system from hyperspace, leaving Sue alone on Jupiter's moon.

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NEW YORK CITY, THE BAXTER BUILDING...
...SO, WE'RE IN THIS OTHER DIMENSION, RIGHT? IT'S LIKE A PARALLEL EARTH.
BUT EVERYBODY'S BEEN TURNED INTO ZOMBIES. IT'S LIKE SHAUN OF THE DEAD.
EXCEPT IT WASN'T FUNNY AT ALL.
EVERYWHERE YOU LOOKED, TWISTED VERSIONS OF PEOPLE YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW, ACTING IN WAYS YOU NEVER THOUGHT THEY WOULD.
EASE YOUR MIND, JOHNNY. I LEARNED A GREAT DEAL ON OUR EXTRADIMENSIONAL TRIP.

I'M IN THE PROCESS OF PUTTING TOGETHER A CONTINGENCY PLAN TO MAKE SURE THAT IT NEVER HAPPENS HERE.
THANKS, T'CHALLA. COULD I ASK YOU SOMETHING ELSE?
DO YOU REALLY NEED TWO BODYGUARDS JUST TO GO TO THE BATHROOM?
IT IS IMPORTANT THAT I NOT BE DISTURBED AS I ATTEND TO MY KINGLY DUTIES.
HA! YOU SAID "DOODIES."
I'M GOING TO THE U.N. FOR A FEW HOURS. I ASSUME YOU'LL USE THE TIME TO CONSTRUCT ANOTHER OF YOUR SOPHISTICATED COMEDY GEMS.
LIKE ALWAYS.
WHERE WERE WE? OH, YEAH.
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A NIGHT ON THE TOWN WITH THE HOTTEST SUPER HERO IN NORTH AMERICA?
OWWW! I APPRECIATE THE ENTHUSIASM, BUT I'M NOT REALLY INTO THE ROUGH STUFF...
C'MON, LET GO! I THINK YOU'RE DISLOCATING MY SHOULDER...

RECONSTRUCTION: CHAPTER FOUR

NEVER ASK HER IF SHE'S WEARING COLORED CONTACT LENSES

DWAYNE McDUFFIE WRITER	PAUL PELLETIER PENCILER	RICK MAGYAR INKER	PAUL MOUNTS COLORIST	VC'S RUS WOOTON LETTERER	MOLLY LAZER ASST. EDITOR	TOM BREVOORT EDITOR	JOE QUESADA EDITOR IN CHIEF	DAN BUCKLEY PUBLISHER

SO, WHAT IS IT?
I DON'T KNOW. EXTERNAL SCANS INDICATE IT'S A COMPLEX BIOCHEMICAL ARTIFACT.
IT'S CONSTRUCTED, NOT A LIFE-FORM. BUT THIS IS THE MOST FASCINATING TECHNOLOGY I'VE EVER SEEN.
IT WILL REQUIRE A GREAT DEAL OF STUDY TO--
TWO DAYS.
PARDON?
YOU'RE THE SMARTEST MAN IN THE WORLD. TWO DAYS IS PLENTY OF TIME FOR YOU TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THAT THING IS, DETERMINE IF IT'S A THREAT, NEUTRALIZE IT AND--
--GET BACK TO MY WIFE ON OUR SECOND HONEYMOON.
I SAID YOU WERE SMART.

SHORTLY...
YOU'RE SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO COME ALONG?
POSITIVE. I'M GOING BACK TO TITAN TO ENJOY THE VIEW. MAYBE I'LL FINISH READING AGAINST THE DAY...
THE LIFEPOD IS SET ON AUTOPILOT. IT'S PRE-PROGRAMMED TO TAKE YOU BACK TO MENTOR'S HOUSE. IF THERE'S ANY PROBLEM--
IF THERE'S ANY PROBLEM, I'M THE INVISIBLE WOMAN.
POINT TAKEN.
I'LL SEE YOU THURSDAY. DON'T MAKE ME COME LOOKING FOR YOU.
I'LL BE THERE. I'LL BRING FLOWERS...
FLOWERS ARE BETTER WHEN THEY'RE A SURPRISE.
OH. RIGHT. I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE, THEN. I LOVE YOU, SUE.
I LOVE YOU TOO, REED.
I'VE GOT YOU NOW, RICHARDS.
WE ARE UNDERWAY. PROCEED TO TARGET 2. COORDINATES FOLLOW.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU SAID THAT.
I DIDN'T SAY IT, I'M JUST TELLING YOU WHAT MICHAEL SAID.
YOU CAN TELL MICHAEL COLLINS THAT MY HAIR IS COMPLETELY NATURAL.

OKAY, YOU KNOW. WHATEVER. SORRY I BROUGHT IT UP.
THIS IS NOT A WEAVE!

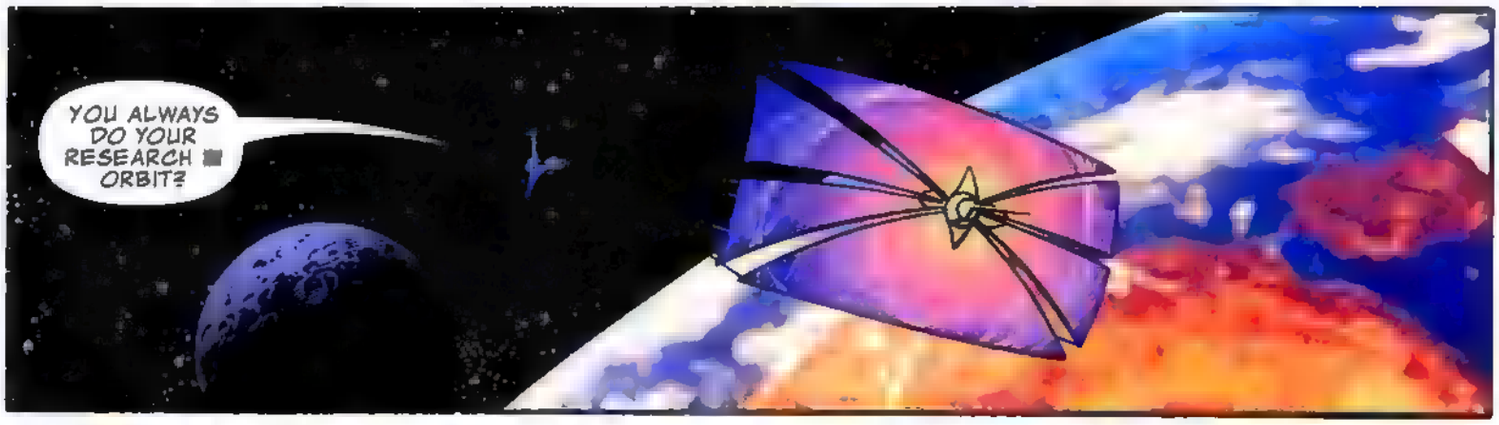
GO AHEAD.
GO AHEAD WHAT?

SEE FOR YOURSELF. PULL MY HAIR.
ARE YOU NUTS?

HARD AS YOU WANT.
I DON'T WANT!
DO IT.
THERE. HAPPY NOW?
I THINK I PROVED MY POINT.
T'CHALLA, I CAN EXPLAIN...
DON'T BOTHER. SHE'S VERY SENSITIVE ABOUT HER HAIR.
WORD OF ADVICE: AS YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE, NEVER ASK HER IF SHE'S WEARING COLORED CONTACT LENSES.
I'M NOT!
I KNOW, MY LOVE.
I'LL BE BACK IN TIME FOR A LATE SUPPER. HAVE MORO MAKE RESERVATIONS. HE ALWAYS KNOWS THE BEST PLACES.

CAMP HAMMOND, STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT...
I'M HERE TO SEE THE DIRECTOR.
YES SIR, DOCTOR RICHARDS!
I CAN HAVE A JEEP SENT OVER TO TAKE YOU THERE.
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, I KNOW THE WAY.
HOLY CRAP! DO YOU KNOW WHO THAT IS?
I KNOW WHO HE IS. I ALSO KNOW THAT IF THIS WASN'T A DRILL, ALLOWING YOURSELF TO BE DISTRACTED COULD GET YOU KILLED. EYE ON THE BALL, SOLDIER.
SEE IF DR. PYM HAS A MOMENT FOR ME.

REED! THIS IS A PLEASANT SURPRISE.
HELLO, HANK. LOTS OF MILITARY AROUND HERE.
YOU NOTICED, HUH? THIS ISN'T EXACTLY WHAT WE HAD IN MIND WHEN WE SET OUT TO SAVE THE WORLD, IS IT?
IT WAS ALWAYS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY. ONE STEP AT A TIME, OLD FRIEND.
I'M GUESSING YOU'RE NOT HERE ON A SOCIAL CALL.
AS CLOSE AS I EVER GET TO ONE. I'VE GOT A SCIENTIFIC PUZZLE I COULD USE SOME HELP WITH. IT'S INTERESTING.
UNLESS YOU PREFER SITTING HERE PUSHING PAPERS?
I'LL BE BACK. DON'T FORWARD ANY CALLS UNLESS THEY'RE FROM TONY STARK OR THE PRESIDENT.
YOU KNOW WHAT? EVEN THEN.


YOU ALWAYS DO YOUR RESEARCH ■ ORBIT?

THIS SHIP'S LAB IS SUFFICIENTLY WELL-EQUIPPED. BESIDES, I LOANED THE BAXTER BUILDING TO T'CHALLA.
AND WHAT'S *THAT* ABOUT? HE'S ON THE *OTHER* SIDE, REMEMBER?

NO, HE'S NOT. WE DISAGREED ON TACTICS BUT OUR GOALS WERE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME.
NOT ■ MY BOOK. ANYWAY, WHY'D YOU BRING ME IN ON THIS?

YOU'RE THE FOREMOST BIOCHEMIST ON EARTH. IT WOULD TAKE ME SEVERAL ***WEEKS*** TO MASTER BIOCHEMISTRY TO YOUR LEVEL OF EXPERTISE.
THANKS?

ARE YOU DONE READING MY NOTES?
READING, YES, BUT THERE'S A *LOT* TO ABSORB HERE.
LET ME SUMMARIZE.

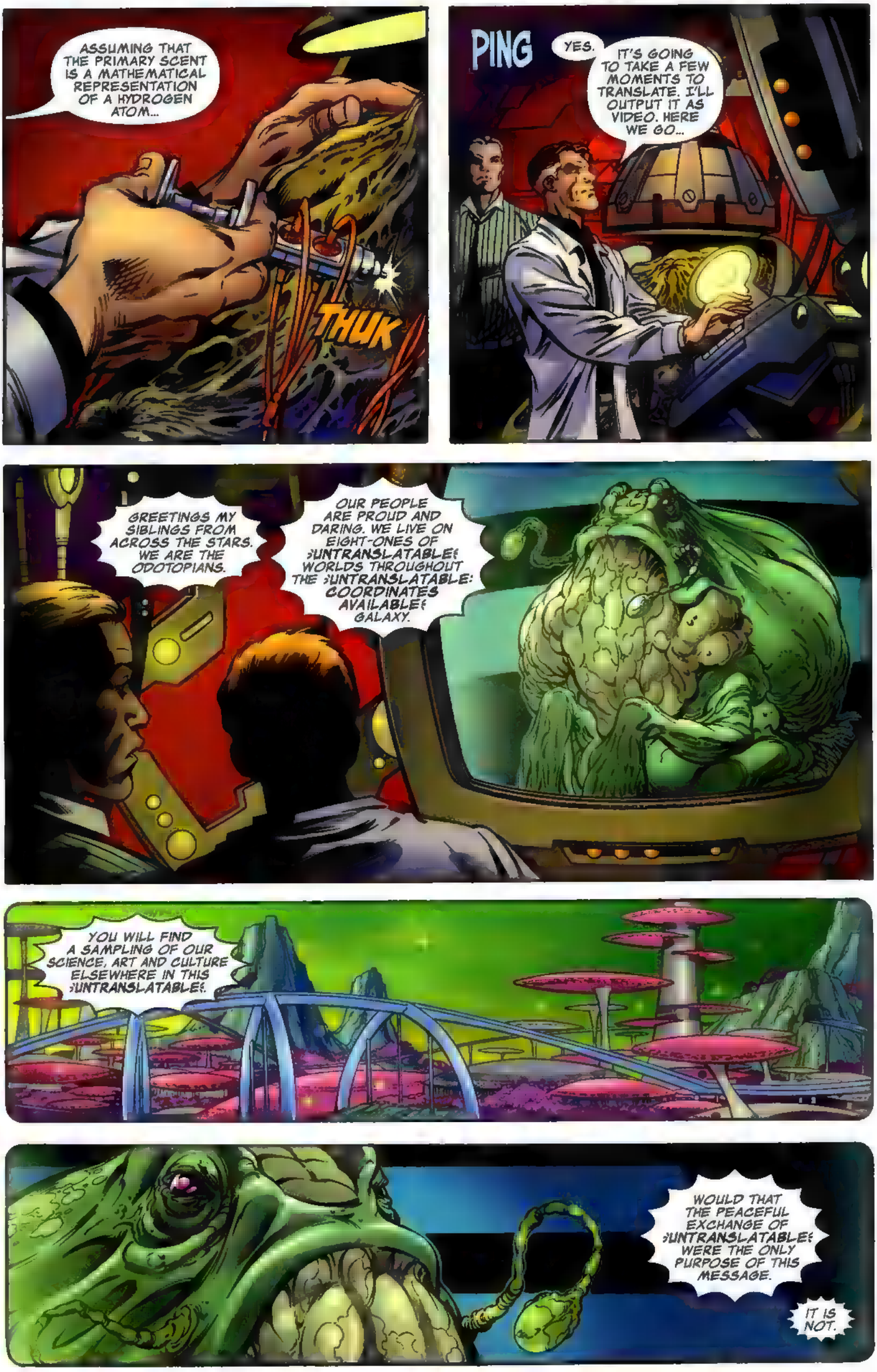
IT APPEARS TO HAVE THREE SECTIONS. THE REAR IS A CHEMICAL FASTER-THAN-LIGHT DRIVE AND A SUBLUMINAL PROPULSION UNIT.
THIS SECTION IS A CHEMICAL SOUP THAT ACTS AS AN ARTIFICIAL "BRAIN" FOR THE WHOLE THING. IT'S ALSO A POWER SOURCE.
BUT THE BULK OF IT IS A LARGE COLLECTION OF CHEMICALS, BONDED BETWEEN LAYERS OF DITERPENE SCLAREOL.
AS FAR AS I KNOW, THAT'S AN ANTIFUNGAL. I SUPPOSE IT COULD [redacted] USED FOR BIOLOGICAL TEMPERATURE REGULATION BUT--
IT'S USED TO MAKE ARTIFICIAL AMBERGRIS.
THE FIXATIVE FOR PERFUME?
YEAH, IT'S A WHALE SECRETION. BUT IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE THESE DAYS, SO THEY MAKE IT ARTIFICIALLY.
SO WHOEVER MADE THIS WAS TRYING TO ACCURATELY PRESERVE THE SCENTS IN BETWEEN THE LAYERS OF THAT STUFF. I'M NOT SURE WHY, THOUGH.

IT'S A HARD DRIVE.
WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
THE RACE THAT ENGINEERED THIS ARE BIOCHEMICAL GENIUSES. IF WE ASSUME THAT THEIR SENSE OF SMELL IS THEIR PRIMARY MEANS OF PERCEIVING THEIR ENVIRONMENT, THINGS BEGIN TO FALL INTO PLACE.
THEIR TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY ARE BIOCHEMICAL. COULDN'T THEIR LANGUAGE BE BASED ON THE EXCHANGE OF ODORS?
AREN'T YOU GLAD BEN WASN'T HERE FOR THAT ONE?
IF YOU'RE SUGGESTING HE WOULD HAVE MADE A JOKE ABOUT FLATULENCE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN INSIGHTFUL.
THIS DEVICE WAS DESIGNED TO STORE A SPECIFIC SEQUENCE OF INFORMATION IN THE FORM OF COMPLEX SCENTS.
SO, IT'S A MESSAGE.
I THINK IT'S VOYAGER 1.
IT'S WHAT?
OF COURSE!
INSTEAD OF FLOWERS, I SHOULD BUY SUE SOME PERFUME.

TITAN, ONE OF SATURN'S MOONS...
WELCOME BACK, MRS. RICHARDS.
WILL DR. RICHARDS BE JOINING YOU FOR DINNER?
HE WON'T BE RETURNING FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS, ISAAC.
THEN I'LL HAVE THE HOUSE PREPARE A MEAL FOR FOUR. I ASSUME YOUR GUESTS WILL BE STAYING FOR DINNER?
GUESTS? WHAT GUES--
KA-THKOOOM
STUPID PLAN. I THOUGHT THE WIZARD WANTED HER ALIVE.
DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS, TRAPSTER. IT'LL TAKE A LOT MORE THAN THAT TO KILL HER.

SEE? NOT A SCRATCH. AND WITH THE LOW GRAVITY HERE, THE FALL--
I'LL SAY.
WILL STILL KILL HER, IF SHE'S NOT CAREFUL. HER MASS IS THE SAME. BUT THE DENSE ATMOSPHERE IS WORKING FOR HER. LOTS OF DRAG.
LOOKS LIKE SHE'S GOT IT UNDER CONTROL, THOUGH. LET'S TRY AND BE THERE TO WELCOME HER WHEN SHE LANDS.
OH!
UNPH!
AH!
WHUMP
THUNK
THUDD
UNNNNH..

[ARTH ORBIT, LAGRANGE POINT 1...
I'M GOING TO ASSUME THE PERFUME EPIPHANY WAS A DIGRESSION...
A TANGENT. YES.
SO, COULD YOU EXPLAIN THE VOYAGER 1 COMMENT?
VOYAGER 1 IS A ROBOTIC SPACE PROBE NASA SENT OUT ABOUT 20 YEARS AGO.
I KNOW WHAT IT IS. IT'S THE ONE WITH THE "MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE" THING... WHAT DID THEY CALL IT?
THE GOLDEN RECORD. A COLLECTION OF SOUNDS AND IMAGES DEPICTING THE DIVERSITY OF HUMAN LIFE, IN THE HOPE THAT AN ALIEN CULTURE WILL ONE DAY FIND IT.
I BELIEVE THAT THIS ARTIFACT IS A SIMILAR DEVICE.
THIS DEVICE SHOULD IDENTIFY THE SCENTS AND DECODE THEM INTO AN ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICAL VOCABULARY.
WHERE'D YOU GET THAT?
I JUST INVENTED IT.
THIS IS EXACTLY WHY WE ALL HATE YOU.


ASSUMING THAT THE PRIMARY SCENT IS A MATHEMATICAL REPRESENTATION OF A HYDROGEN ATOM...
THUK
PING
YES.
IT'S GOING TO TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO TRANSLATE. I'LL OUTPUT IT AS VIDEO. HERE WE GO...
GREETINGS MY SIBLINGS FROM ACROSS THE STARS. WE ARE THE ODOTOPIANS.
OUR PEOPLE ARE PROUD AND DARING. WE LIVE ON EIGHT-ONES OF ›UNTRANSLATABLE‹ WORLDS THROUGHOUT THE ›UNTRANSLATABLE: COORDINATES AVAILABLE‹ GALAXY.
YOU WILL FIND A SAMPLING OF OUR SCIENCE, ART AND CULTURE ELSEWHERE IN THIS ›UNTRANSLATABLE‹.
WOULD THAT THE PEACEFUL EXCHANGE OF ›UNTRANSLATABLE‹ WERE THE ONLY PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE.
IT IS NOT.

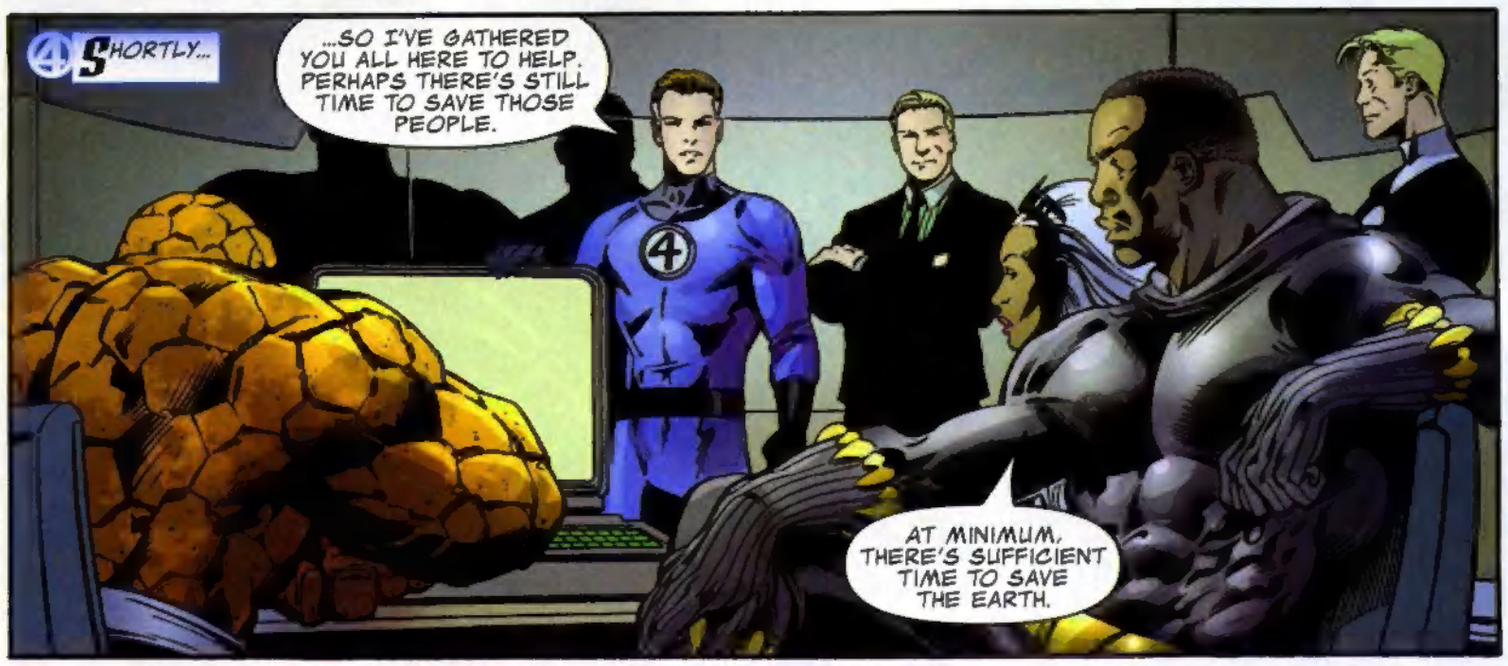
BY THE TIME YOU RECEIVE THIS MESSAGE THE ODOTOPIAN RACE WILL BE, IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, EXTINCT.
THEY CALL THEMSELVES "THE CONTRASEPSIS." THEY ATTACKED WITHOUT WARNING. INDIVIDUALLY, THEY ARE RELATIVELY WEAK, BUT THEIR NUMBERS AND TENACITY SEEM LIMITLESS.
WE HAVE LEARNED AT GREAT COST THAT THEY CANNOT [redacted] NEGOTIATED WITH, THEY WANT ONLY OUR DESTRUCTION.
WE HAVE LEARNED ONE THING OTHER, THE CONTRASEPSIS' [redacted]UNTRANSLATABLE[redacted] IS CLEAR. AS SOON AS THEY ARE FINISHED WITH US--
--THEY ARE COMING FOR YOU.

TITAN...
HAVE A NICE NAP THERE, SWEETIE?
DAMN! SHOULD'VE SEEN THAT ONE COMING.
OR IS THAT NOT SEEN IT COMING?
DON'T WORRY, TITANIA--
--I DON'T HAVE TO SEE HER TO HIT HER!
SPLORT
KINDA THINK YOU DO, SPORT.
THAT'S OKAY, SHE WON'T BE HARD TO FIND.
UNLESS SHE DOES THAT.
ONLY ONE PLACE FOR HER TO GO. HEAD FOR THE HOUSE.

NEW YORK CITY, THE UNITED NATIONS BUILDING...
...YOU MUST CONCEDE, ANY U.S. POLICY THAT PUTS LATVERIA, ATLANTIS, ATTILAN AND WAKANDA ON THE SAME SIDE CREATES A REMARKABLY UNSTABLE SITUATION.
ATTILAN HAS ALL BUT DECLARED WAR WITH HUMANITY, SURELY YOU'RE NOT SUGGESTING--

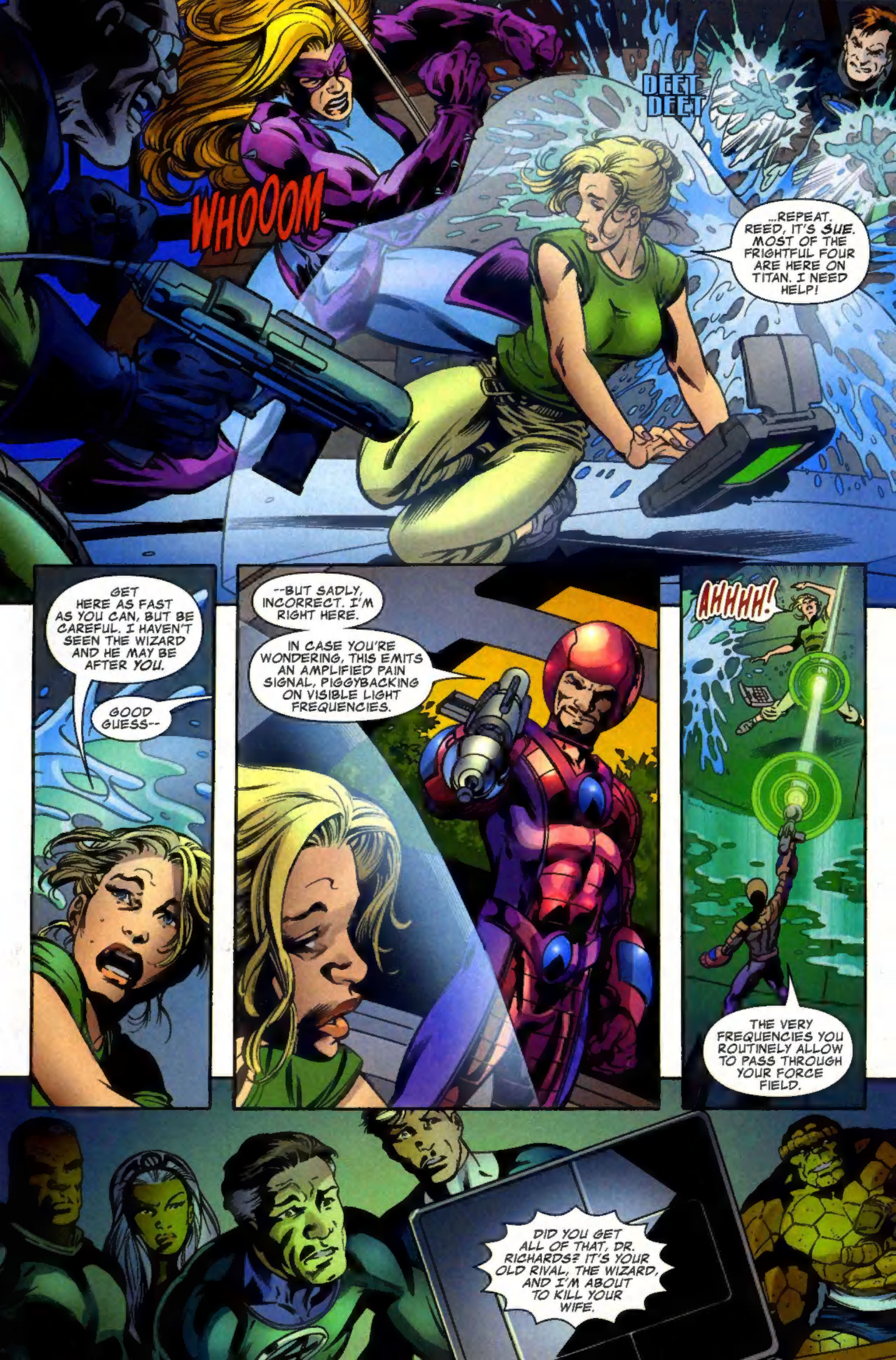
CERTAINLY NOT. BUT I ONLY SPEAK FOR WAKANDA, AND THE OTHERS ARE FAR MORE INTERVENTIONIST THAN MY PEOPLE.
APOLOGIES, MY CHIEFTAIN, BUT REED RICHARDS IS OUTSIDE--

"--AND HE'S RATHER INSISTENTLY REQUESTING YOUR ATTENTION."


SHORTLY...
...SO I'VE GATHERED YOU ALL HERE TO HELP. PERHAPS THERE'S STILL TIME TO SAVE THOSE PEOPLE.
AT MINIMUM, THERE'S SUFFICIENT TIME TO SAVE THE EARTH.

DR. PYM, REEXAMINE THE ARTIFACT. THERE MAY BE IMPORTANT INFORMATION YET TO BE DISCOVERED.
I DON'T TAKE ORDERS FROM YOU, T'CHALLA.
YOU DO WHEN THEY MAKE SENSE. GET A TEAM TOGETHER AND GET TO WORK.

DR. RICHARDS? I ASSUME YOU AND THE REST OF THE FF WILL WANT TO GO TO THE ARTIFACT'S POINT OF ORIGIN.
YES. I'LL PICK UP SUE ON THE WAY.
AND I WILL JOIN--
DEET DEET


WHOOOM
DEET DEET
...REPEAT. REED, IT'S SUE. MOST OF THE FRIGHTFUL FOUR ARE HERE ON TITAN. I NEED HELP!
GET HERE AS FAST AS YOU CAN, BUT BE CAREFUL. I HAVEN'T SEEN THE WIZARD AND HE MAY BE AFTER YOU.
GOOD GUESS--
--BUT SADLY, INCORRECT. I'M RIGHT HERE.
IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING, THIS EMITS AN AMPLIFIED PAIN SIGNAL, PIGGYBACKING ON VISIBLE LIGHT FREQUENCIES.
AHHHH!
THE VERY FREQUENCIES YOU ROUTINELY ALLOW TO PASS THROUGH YOUR FORCE FIELD.
DID YOU GET ALL OF THAT, DR. RICHARDS? IT'S YOUR OLD RIVAL, THE WIZARD, AND I'M ABOUT TO KILL YOUR WIFE.

COME AND GET ME, IF YOU CAN.
KLIK
MANY POINTS FOR SMACK-TALKING, BUT YOU SURE YOU WANT TO PISS HIM OFF LIKE THAT?
ALL PART OF THE PLAN.
RIGHT NOW, HE'S GATHERING HIS TEAMMATES, UNAWARE THAT I PLANTED AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE IN HIS SHIP.
NEXT HE'LL FLY CLEAR OF THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE AND ENGAGE HIS F.T.L. DRIVE, THEREBY TRIGGERING MY DEVICE.
OR, DARE I HOPE? HE'S SO UPSET BY HIS WIFE'S PLIGHT THAT HE RECKLESSLY ENGAGES THE F.T.L. DRIVE WHILE STILL IN THE ATMOSPHERE.
WOULDN'T THAT MAKE A PRETTY PICTURE?
IN EITHER EVENT, THE RESULTS ARE THE SAME--

"--THE END OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR!"
Chooom
TO BE CONTINUED...